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Orlando Ramón AGOSTI Echenique (Phonetic: ahGOstee)

ARGENTINA

Commander in Chief of the Air Force; Member, Ruling Junta

Addressed as:
General Agosti

Commander in Chief of the Air Force since December 1975, Brig. Gen. Orlando Agosti became a member of the three-man military junta after the coup that overthrew President María de Perón's government in March 1976. Agosti has enjoyed a long personal relationship with President Jorge Videla. Reared in the same small town in Buenos Aires Province and friends since childhood, the two men were both assigned to Washington, D.C., in the early 1960s.

Speaking to a group of businessmen in October 1977, Agosti declared his complete confidence in the aims and methodology of the military-led national reorganization. Denying the charge that the regime is a dictatorship, he pointed out that the junta, as a plural executive, has a built-in system of checks and balances, which should prevent the formation of personality cults. He viewed likely periodic changes in the top-level military commanders, occasioned by eventual retirements, as an implicit safeguard against the concentration of power in the hands of a single strongman. Praising the "iron-clad unity" among the three armed services, he called it the country's guarantee of continuity and stability. He appealed to the business community to do its part in national reorganization by increasing productivity, rather than by demanding unreasonable public support at the expense of an impoverished nation.

Agosti, 53, is a golfing enthusiast. He speaks English. He is married and has a son and a daughter.

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